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The President also presented to the Society four parts of a work in the course of publication, entitled "American Battle-roll; from Lexington to Mexico, by Henry B. Dawson;" a gift from the author.

*Voted*, That the thanks of the Society be presented to Henry B. Dawson, Esq., for the first four numbers of his beautifully illustrated work.

The President read a note from Mr. Warren, inviting the Society to meet at his residence, in Beacon Street, on the evening of Tuesday, the 21st of December. The invitation was accepted.

EDWARD A. CROWNINSHIELD, Esq., was elected a Resident Member.

Mr. ELLIS presented two Chinese maps; a gift from Lieutenant George H. Preble.

Mr. SALSTONSTALL presented two of Ames's Almanacs of the years 1765 and 1766, with manuscript notes, and a small volume of notes of sermons in manuscript; which were referred to the Publishing Committee.

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#### SPECIAL MEETING.

A special meeting of the Society was held this evening, the 21st of December (the anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims), at the residence of Hon. Charles H. Warren, No. 50, Beacon Street.

The President took the chair, and called the Society to order, at eight o'clock. In the course of his introductory remarks, he stated, that, over fifty years ago, an attempt

was made to pledge the Society to an annual celebration of the landing of the Pilgrims, but that there had been only one celebration of the day by it; viz., in 1813, when Judge Davis delivered an oration at the King's Chapel, and the Society dined at Concert Hall. On the present occasion, Mr. Winthrop said they had assembled at the invitation of an associate, who had six direct ancestors who were passengers in the "Mayflower," and could claim two more, at least, in right of his wife.

Mr. WINTHROP then alluded to a visit he had made during the last summer to Cape Cod; to the beauty of the bluff at Truro; and of the old Cape-Cod harbor, in which the "Mayflower" was first moored. He deeply regretted to learn that there was still a well-founded apprehension, that the action of the winds and waves on the sand-hills around the harbor would cut off all connection with the main land; and he expressed the hope, that public attention would be seriously turned to that fact.

Mr. Winthrop referred to the mistaken popular impression that existed as to the precise facts which occurred on the 21st of December, 1620. He named an elaborate engraving, published in London, and dedicated to the people of the United States, in which the Pilgrims are represented as landing on the 15th of November, 1620; when the truth is, that only a few of the company went ashore at Cape Cod as an exploring party. It had also been represented in art and in literature, that on the 21st of December, 1620, the whole Pilgrim company landed at Plymouth; but the "May-

flower," on that day, was moored in the harbor of Cape Cod, having on board Elder Brewster and all the women and children. At that date, there landed at Plymouth a party of explorers, who had gone out in a shallop to seek a place for a permanent habitation; and it was many days after, before the whole company arrived at Plymouth. He thought that art should be more true to historical fact.

Mr. Winthrop said that a question had been raised, whether Mary Chilton or John Alden was the first to step on the rock, and that Judge Davis had suggested, that, as a matter of gallantry, the preference should be awarded to the lady; but Professor Longfellow, in his late poem, had made John Alden the Protesilaus of the expedition, though with no other penalty than the wrath of Miles Standish for his having won the affections of Priscilla Mullins. But, if the question related to the 21st of December, it was altogether a foreign one; since there were no females in the shallop which came to Plymouth on that day, and John Alden was not one of the boat's crew, the names of whom are given by Bradford.

Mr. WARREN described various memorials of the Pilgrims, which stood in view in the apartment in which the Society were assembled. The chair in which the President sat came over in the "Mayflower." The seal used by Governor Winslow, with his arms and crest, and a pewter plate, with his initials on the back, and coat-of-arms on the rim, were on the table; also the swords of Brewster, Standish, and Carver. The Standish sword was once in the keeping of Dr. Belknap, to

whom, on one occasion, when it was thought necessary to have a volunteer night patrol in Boston, the late Judge Davis addressed the following note:—

MONDAY EVENING, ———

DEAR SIR,— Will you confide to my care Miles Standish's sword till to-morrow morning? I shall think myself honored in mounting guard with it. If I expected any use for it, however, I should hardly dare to ask for the loan, lest this venerable weapon should for the first time be discredited.

Yours as ever,

JN. DAVIS.

Dr. BELKNAP.

Mr. Warren exhibited two scrap-books — the property of William Gilmore, Esq., of Baltimore, Md. — containing a rare collection of autographs. Amongst them were those of Queen Elizabeth, Oliver Cromwell, and many other distinguished persons in different ages and countries.

Mr. Warren read the original of Dr. Franklin's letter to Miss Hubbard, of Boston, dated Feb. 23, 1756, on the death of his brother, John Franklin, a copy of which will be found printed in Mr. Sparks's collection. He also read the following extract from a letter of General Jackson to Mr. Poinsett:—

“HERMITAGE, 10th January, 1838.

“This will be handed you by my friend —, who is a young gentleman of good education and high moral worth. He was pursuing a course of studies to fit himself for the ministry, of the Episcopalian order; and, to enable him to proceed, he became Editor of the “Nashville Union” for a short time. This so displeased a few of the Whig editors, and dea-

cons of the church, that they, for his becoming editor, dropped him as a candidate for orders in their church, — some of whom are believed here never to have had three grains of religion among them.”

Besides the autographs above alluded to, Mr. Warren selected for examination specimens of Washington’s handwriting at the age of thirteen years, and also a report of a survey of a piece of land made by Washington at the age of seventeen, signed “G. Washington, S.C.C.” (perhaps, Surveyor for County Court).

Mr. SAVAGE offered, at some length, interesting and impressive remarks regarding the providential character of the events which led to, accompanied, and followed the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth.

Mr. BRIGHAM read extracts from the wills and inventories of Miles Standish, Elder Brewster, and Governor Bradford, which he had copied from original records. He particularly called attention to the following sentences from Governor Bradford’s will: —

“I commend unto your wisdom and discretion some small books written by my own hand, to be improved as you shall see meet. In special, I commend to you a little book with a black cover, wherein is a word to New England, with sundry useful verses.”

Mr. DEANE stated that there was among the Belknap Papers a fragment of that “little book,” in Bradford’s hand, of which Dr. Belknap had published a portion in the third volume of the Society’s Collections. He also mentioned, that, while two or three of the officers of the Society were recently examining a very early manu-

script copy of Bradford's Poems in their archives, they had discovered that it contains a complete transcript of his "Description of New England,"—of which only the fragment above alluded to had been already printed,—and several other "verses" which were heretofore unknown to exist.

Mr. FELTON offered the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted; viz.,—

*Resolved*, That the thanks of the Massachusetts Historical Society be presented to their distinguished associate, the Hon. Edward Everett, for the interesting, instructive, and eloquent eulogy pronounced by him, at their request, on the evening of the 9th instant, on the late Thomas Dowse; and that he be respectfully requested to furnish a copy for publication.

Thanks were also voted to our venerable associate, Rev. William Jenks, D.D., for his highly acceptable service to the Society, as chaplain, on the occasion of Mr. Everett's discourse.

An interesting conversation ensued, in which Messrs. Savage, Ellis, Shurtleff, and Warren participated.

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JANUARY MEETING. — 1859.

The Society held their stated monthly meeting on Thursday, Jan. 13, at noon, in their rooms, Tremont Street, Boston; the President, Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, in the chair.